

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 051197

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, CA

SUBJECT:ARCTIC GAS PIPELINES

1. CANADIAN AMBASSADOR WARREN CALLED ON ACTING SECRETARY MARCH 2 ON INSTRUCTIONS AND LEFT FOLLOWING CONFIDENTIAL BOUT DE PAPIER: "THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD WISH TO KEEP ITS NORTHERN PIPELINE OPTIONS OPEN AND, TO THIS END, CANADIAN OFFICIALS WOULD WELCOME REGULAR CONSULTATION WITH UNITED STATES OFFICIALS AS TO THE PROGRESS OF RESPECTIVE REGULATORY PROCESSES." WARREN NOTED THAT HE HAD BEEN ASKED TO CONVEY THIS MESSAGE AS THE RESULT OF A RECENT CABINET MEETING WHICH REVIEWED THE NORTHERN PIPELINE SITUATION.

2. THE ACTING SECRETARY WELCOMED CANADIAN INTEREST IN COORDINATING OUR REVIEW PROCESSES. HE NOTED US IS MOST ANXIOUS TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE GOC AND BELIEVES IT WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL FOR EITHER COUNTRY TO GET OUT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER WITH A PUBLICLY-ANNOUNCED DECISION. WARREN COMMENTED THAT THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT GOC HAS IN MIND BY TERM CONFIDENTIAL

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"KEEPING ITS OPTIONS OPEN."

3. WARREN SAID GOC EXPECTED THAT NORMAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN MINISTRIES AND OFFICIALS WOULD CONTINUE TO BE USED TO KEEP EACH GOVERNMENT INFORMED. ACTING SECRETARY SUGGESTED THAT

MEETING BETWEEN ENERGY MINISTER GILLESPIE AND FEA ADMINISTRATOR ZARB COULD ALSO BE USEFUL. WARREN INDICATED GOC ALSO HAD IN MIND SENIOR LEVEL MEETINGS, PERHAPS CLOSER TO TIME OF DECISION AND SUGGESTED THAT APPROPRIATE COMPOSITION OF TEAMS FOR SUCH MEETINGS COULD BETTER BE WORKED OUT AT THAT TIME.

4. ACTING SECRETARY ALSO REVIEWED PROPOSED ADMINISTRATION BILL NOTING THAT PRESIDENT HAD NOT TAKEN POSITION IN FAVOR OF EITHER TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVE BUT WAS MOVING TO ACCELERATE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS ITSELF. INGERSOLL

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